



# STATE OF IOWA

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## Many Iowa Households Safer After Latest Prescription Drug Take Back

DES MOINES – National Prescription Drug Take Back efforts September 27<sup>th</sup> collected 8,170 pounds, or over four tons, of old or unused medicines in Iowa. That's the second-highest one-day total for our state, bringing Iowa's total Take Back haul since the program's inception four years ago to more than 25 tons of prescription drugs.

"Iowans turned out at more than 80 sites to safely dispose of prescription drugs, showing again how we can protect our children and environment from medicine abuse and contamination," said Steve Lukan, Director of the Governor's Office of Drug Control Policy. "Because families and friends are a major source of prescription drugs abused by youth, prevention efforts like this result in more secure medicine cabinets and safer households."

The most recent semiannual Take Back events are scheduled to be the last of their kind sponsored by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, because of a change in federal law due to take effect this month that may permit the return of prescription drugs to pharmacies or by mail. The State Pharmacy Board must review the new federal law before recommending how it will be implemented in Iowa. In the meantime, local law enforcement Take Back programs and other efforts will continue.

"Over 260 million doses of prescription drugs with a potential for abuse were dispensed in Iowa last year, so it's important to keep securing and safely disposing of unused medicines, as a matter of routine," said Lukan. "To prevent prescription drug abuse, we want Iowans to practice 'TLC:' *Talk* with children about the safe use of medicine; *Lock*, or secure, prescription drugs at home; and *Connect* for help (<http://www.IowaMedicineTLC.org>).

Until more is known about future Take Back opportunities, some Iowans can use local law enforcement collection boxes or similar ongoing programs. Another option is to mix old unidentifiable medicines with used coffee grounds or kitty litter to toss in the weekly trash.

On September 27 in its six-state Midwest division that includes Iowa, the DEA reports 52,962 pounds of prescription drugs were collected. New U.S. figures are not available, but through April 2014 the DEA says over 2,000 tons of medicines had been collected nationally during four years of Take Backs.

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